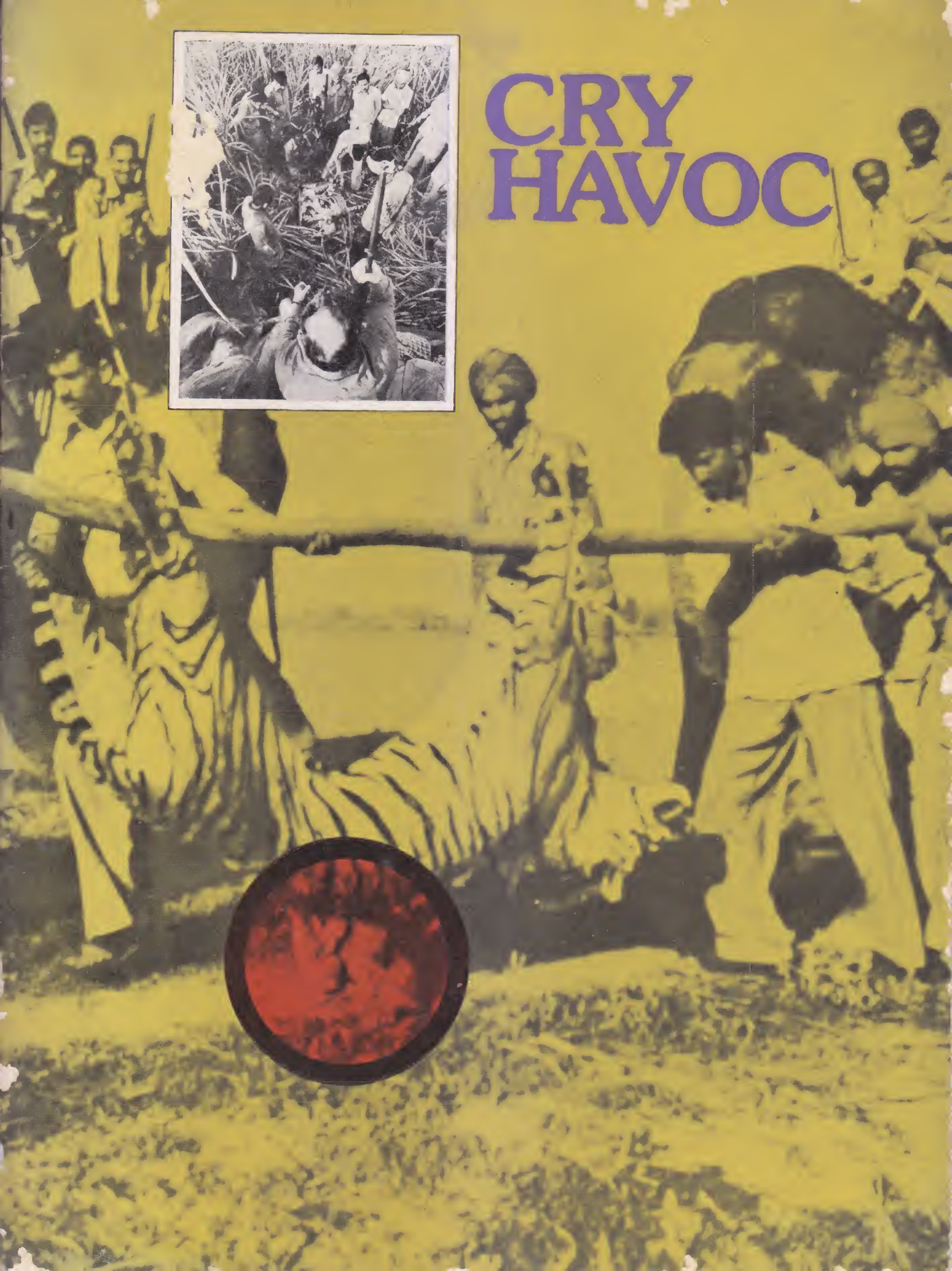


# CRY HAVOC



# **CRY HAVOC**

ARJAN SINGH

## Prologue

*Being a brief account of the losing battle of attrition fought by the tiger in defence of his dwindling habitat*

Nominated as the National Animal by popular acclaim. Proclaimed as an Endangered Species by the World Wildlife Fund. For its protection they initiated Project Tiger and a contribution of a million dollars. The cynosure of every Wildlife tourist's questing eye. Among the best known animals in the world. Renowned for its matchless beauty and grace. Accepted by industry as the ultimate in power advertisement. A symbol of mystery in folklore and legend, and a divinity to primitive people, the days of the tiger are numbered before the inexorable demographic march of progress. The crucial question now is not : can we save the tiger? but how soon will the final bell of extinction toll before the advance of an uncontrolled population whose demands cannot be gainsaid by the democratic rulers of the country? Man now cannot live with nature. He has so plundered her utility that he must subdue her or perish. When floods devastate vast areas due to massive forest fellings we seek to check the forces of erosion not by damming or diverting the river of sorrow, but by the plantation of trees in catchment areas, and large sums of money are allocated whereby in our terror we seek to repair the great damage we have caused by the over-exploitation of natural timbers, and appease the wrath of nature. But when a tiger reacts to a natural despoliation of habitat and prey species, we try not to remedy his living conditions, but to destroy him for daring to disobey man-made laws, for that is the simplest solution.

Of the eight subspecies extant at one time the Caspian and the Balinese are believed to be extinct and the Javan at the point of extinction. The Siberian or parent race number 200—300, in scattered Reserves; reports from Russia are scanty and it is not known whether their habitat is encroached upon, and their prey species hunted, though tigers are supposed to be protected. They are increasingly coming into conflict with humans, and that obviously is the beginning of the end. The Chinese treated the tiger as an agricultural pest during Mao's regime, and though the outlook has ostensibly changed, very little is known of the present status, though it is surmised that a relict population of 50 is all that exists of P.T. Amoyensis. The Indo-Chinese subspecies is still hunted in the country from which it derives its name. It has no protection in Burma and as an aftermath of war and napalm bombing its future is in considerable doubt. 600—800 of the Sumatran are under pressure from an increasing and demanding human population, and a long term survival is doubtful.

The nominate race of *Panthera Tigris* was considered by the World Wildlife Fund to have the best chance of survival into the infinite future, and aided by its moral backing Tiger Project was launched in 1973 with much fanfare. A mid-term appraisal by an IUCN team revealed many shortcomings and a report in the *Guardian* criticised the functioning of the Project, and its parochial approach. These publications were hailed with great ire by the local authorities as an attempt by Foreign Nationals to interfere with an Indian Project. Unfortunately this has been greeted by silence from international forums, and since then the euphoric figures of fantastic increases in tiger populations in a dwindling habitat are accepted without demur, and have now become a status symbol for the field officers in tiger areas. The tiger population increases of the All India census of 10% per annum, and that of the Corbett Park of 16% per annum are an impossibility.

I wish to examine the situation in the State of Uttar Pradesh, and particularly in the precincts of the Dudhwa National Park, with the warning that the position as it prevails today had to start somewhere and unless drastic remedial action is taken these conditions will spread to other parts wherever tigers are supposed to co-exist with the ever increasing human population. The pressures have increased immeasurably since the Project was initiated 12 years ago, and the burning question is what awaits the tiger in the 21st Century when the human population is forging ahead of the billion mark. Intellectuals speak of a stabilization of population. That is wishful thinking. For the tiger is at the Point of No Return.



## *"Cry Havoc! and let slip the dogs of War"*

JULIUS CAESAR

The Dudhwa National Park was declared as such at the insistence of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, and in spite of the active opposition of the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, and the entire Forest Department. This was one of the bonuses of the Emergency; the other being the placing of Forests and Wildlife on the Concurrent List of Subjects which had hitherto been on the State List, and still offers a faint gleam of hope in the gloom encompassing the future of Wildlife. If only the Central Government would realize that State Governments with increasing population pressures, cannot enforce legislation favouring Wildlife, and unless an inbuilt infrastructure is created to look after Wildlife, it cannot survive.

The 2nd March 1978 dawned to the raucous shouts of 200 cartmen encamped in the forest with their carts and buffaloes. The stench of resident humanity was all pervading. They were extracting wind-fallen timber from the forest, and had been in residence since October 1977. Further away the rattle of trucks and grinding of gears at a convenient storage site carried the stacked timber away to a depot maintained by the Forest Corporation.

The Park had been declared on the 1st February 1977, and I had been included in the Committee of Management on the advice of the Prime Minister, among a number of senior officials. Resentment however was simmering among the bureaucrats and their first salve was a suggestion that the Forest Corporation should be allowed the extraction of wind blown *sal* (*shorea robusta*) though the Wildlife Act of 1972 specifically prohibited any commercial operations in a Park. I was vehement in my opposition, but as the whole operation was ultra vires, I presume the Chairman, who was the senior bureaucrat in the State Government, wished for a consensus. He proposed a compromise, by which the proceeds of the sale would be credited to Park Funds. As fund allotments are invariably constricted in budgetary allocations in the State for non-revenue-earning subjects I agreed to this suggestion, especially as extraction operations were supposed to be completed by the 31st December 1977. However, as it later transpired, this was obviously part of a deep laid scheme, in spite of the fact that the Chairman had said on numerous occasions that no commercial operations would be permitted. The operations continued till the outbreak of the rains in late June rendered further scavenging impossible. Moreover when the funds amounting to Rs. 32,00,000 were collected the Finance Department who had been represented on the Project Committee and had agreed to the compromise, took possession of the money which had been placed with a bank on Fixed Deposit, and refused to part with it.

There is a section 420 in the Indian Penal Code which provides severe penalties for fraud and deceit for individuals, but apparently Governments and their Departments deem themselves immune to its implications.

The Hulashkhani Bhagar, famous as a resort of tigers, is a marshy lake surrounded by Narkul (*Arundo Donax*), and shady Jamun (*Zhygium Cuminii*) trees. On the periphery are outcrops of *ratwa* grass, favoured by tigers during the winter and early spring, and the Neora river meanders along its outskirts. Historically a well frequented killing ground for tigers, it was here that the tigress was photographed in a trap in 1972 and is displayed in a WWF fund-raising poster.

An escarpment runs the length of the Park along the north bank of the river, and overlooking the Bhagar was the human encampment combing the forest for fallen timber.

The great cats have strong attachments to their home ranges, influenced of course by territorial pressures of more powerful conspecifics. With wild prey species disoriented by this human invasion, resident tigers took to hanging round the periphery of the

encampment to pick up straying domestic stock. Gradually familiarity emboldened them, and on the fateful day a cartman named Akbar went to answer the call of nature beside an outcrop of Narkul. Tigers are chary of tackling humans in an unfamiliar two legged stance; and Long Toes, who shared the range with his sibling, Tara's Male, presumably killed Akbar while he was squatting, as his *lungi* was folded to one side. He was dragged for about twenty yards, but not eaten. His corpse was rescued after a sufficient number of men had been gathered, and the tiger had in the meantime killed a bullock which was tethered close at hand. It was the fateful date on which the ongoing ecological conflict began. This was the first case of mankilling by a tiger after eighteen years, when the 3 killings also had been triggered by the colonization of tiger habitat, and significantly marked the beginning of an endemic conflict between tigers and humans. Coincidentally a synchronized killing took place by a tigress about 65 km away on the 15th March, and another by a male tiger on the 31st of March, about 15 km from the site of the first killing. The cry for blood was overwhelming, but I wrote to the Chief Wildlife Warden to say that I was surprised such an incident had not taken place sooner.

These were 3 different tigers. Since that fateful month in March 1978 over 175 people have been killed by tigers in the District, but the pity of it is that instead of taking measures to remedy the conditions under which the tiger has turned on men, we have declared war on a species for not obeying human laws, and since that day 13 tigers have been destroyed. We are not willing to grant that this phenomenon is an ecological reaction to the despoliation of natural creation. When I came here 40 years ago the farmers who drifted in after partition used to tell me that the tiger was their best unpaid night watchman, and no herbivore came to graze his field when the tiger passed. Now when the agriculturists have shot up all the wild prey, they are reaping the whirlwind, but the bell has ironically tolled for the tiger.

With the unplanned reclamation of grasslands in the District, and the massive plantation of sugarcane, the tigers who were isolated in low lying marshlands have taken to an agricultural habitat, and the decimation of wild quadruped prey species have brought them into conflict with the unfamiliar and bi-pedal human. Yet the State Government continues to sanction the setting up of sugar factories, and there are four in the immediate vicinity. As a consequence the tribals immediately to the north of the Park who have never planted sugarcane in their existence, have now been encouraged by Government loans to proliferate a problem with which they have never been beset, of course to the ultimate destruction of the offending tiger.

The stark reality of the situation is that State Governments cannot and will not resist the pressure of their voting public to destroy a potential danger to their lives and livelihood, and with an exploding population and an agricultural economy, the problem must be increasingly aggravated until the end comes with the extinction of the tiger. State Governments have only accepted Project Tiger and Save the Tiger Campaign under pressure from a prestigious leader, and moreover have been unwillingly committed to sharing expenses, but it is obvious that such a situation with an individual bias cannot last. An example is immediately to hand, from when the Janata Government took over in 1977, and the Prime Minister had no interest in Wildlife. The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh slashed the Wildlife Budget with the remark that a poor State could not afford luxuries (*sic*).

The State has an insensate resentment to adopting guidelines offered by the Centre, and this stems in the main from the incongruous system of matching grants by which the Centre endeavours to motivate the State into adopting a responsibility towards the conservation of Wildlife by insisting on funding contributions. The result is that funds are not released by the Central Government until the States contribute their share, and entire projects are often shelved because of the tardy response of States. An apposite illustration is the prestigious Rhino Reintroduction Project which was initiated and drafted by the Centre. Certain norms were prescribed which had to be completed before the rhinos were translocated. However no preliminary arrangements were initiated, and the rhinos were imported under the shadow of a petty dispute between the Chief Wildlife Warden and the Director of the Park.

Budgetary cuts involving a retrenchment of existing staff were initiated, and the vehicle allotted to the Project was sent elsewhere. Moreover, a Grant of Rs. 18,00,000 specifically for the Project was so delayed by the State Government in their allocation of the matching grant that the entire amount lapsed. No extra staff is allotted, and this Project with international connotations limps along at the mercy of any small incident which may precipitate an incursion of rhinos into cultivated areas, and the resultant retaliation by farmers. It almost looks as if the State wishes the Project to fail.

To the predator anything that moves is a prey species. Its acceptance is based on other inhibitions. For the tiger, the elephant is too large, the mouse is too small. The human is unfamiliar, because he moves around in the day time, wears skins other than his own, lives outside the forest, but chiefly because of his upright two legged stance, makes him stand out as an alien species. But circumstances can alter these conditions and when there is a scarcity of prey species, together with a growing familiarity because humans have trespassed into tiger habitat, or have created conditions which has encouraged such a process of familiarization, there is no reason why the tiger will not accept the human as a prey species.

There was a time up to the 1930s when the tigers of the Tarai bred mainly in the wilderness of Nepal, and only colonized those forests in India which were far from human habitation. Even forests adjoining cultivation which abounded in prey species were avoided because of the human presence, and there seemed to be an accepted buffer beyond which the tiger did not trespass. However cases of conflict with the human do occur and sporadic cases of maneating in Kalahandi in Orissa and Mandla and Bastar in Madhya Pradesh have occurred within the present century. This conflict is endemic however in the Sunderbans, and a study by a scientist from the IUCN suggested that the fierceness of these semi-aquatic tigers may be due to a physiological effect from the intake of brackish waters. Certainly sea snakes and the salt water crocodile appear to be more aggressive than their fresh water counterparts.

The situation now is entirely different from what it was during the pre-Independence era. Habitat areas have shrunk considerably, and with the horrifying thought that such encroachment must increase with a rise in population we must rationalize conditions in which wildlife areas will remain sacrosanct now.

The incidence of maneating was highlighted by Corbett when he wrote his books. They related to the Kumaon hills and foothills, and the basic cause of tigers taking to an alien diet was a local paucity of prey. However, they were mainly compulsive maneaters who had accepted the human as a prey species. As an example two of his maneaters killed 836 people between them, but also subsisted on other diet when available, for it probably is a fallacy, which can only be resolved by cannibals, that human flesh is more delectable than other forms.

The situation now is entirely different, and the tiger is under intense and increasing pressure from the human. When the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972 was drafted, the Chief Wildlife Warden of the State was designated as the final and sole authority empowered to declare the destruction of an animal which in his opinion has become dangerous to human life, and to designate the person who would destroy it. This clause inserted with the best of intentions has proved to be infructuous, and tigers are being earmarked as maneaters under political pressure. Concomitant with this situation is the fact that once a maneater is declared, the destruction of any tiger in the area appears to be fair game. Moreover the willingness of the Government to allocate the skin to the killer as a trophy has made many officers eager to engage in such a hunt, and to them the status symbol is not to save a tiger, but to kill one.

The Directorate of Wildlife of the Central Government seeing the situation develop have outlined certain guidelines to be followed before the declaration of a maneater, but these are disregarded by the State Authority. The Centre has recommended that only when a

tiger seeks out, stalks or waits for human beings, and eats the dead body of more than one human should it be classified as a maneater.

The State Government in disregard to these guidelines and instead of trying to remedy the conditions which have forced a tiger to kill a man, have declared war on them. It is a travesty that though a million and many millions of rupees are spent on Project Tiger, no attempt is made to rationalize their living conditions. Another portent is that whereas originally some attempt was made to protect the tiger the latest attitude is that the offending animal should be destroyed as soon as possible.

In 1979 a study team from Project Tiger was appointed by the IBWL to make a survey of the ongoing maneating situation and make recommendations to alleviate the situation. They reported on the destruction of the grasslands, the unplanned and extensive plantations of sugarcane and the continuance of the tiger in these cultivated fields, which together with the extensive poaching of wild prey species brought them into conflict with the agriculturist; and the uncontrollable intrusion of humans into tiger habitat. They recommended that a special cadre known as the Tiger Watch be formed to monitor the possible occurrence of so-called aberrant tigers. However no attention was paid to these recommendations and as killings continued, especially in the Gola area of South Kheri, the resultant witch hunt slew two innocent tigers before the culprit was brought to book. Instances of mankilling continued as tigers moved from the forest into sugarcane area, partly because of expanding populations, but also due to intensive human intrusion into forest areas in search of building material, and the resultant fires; whereas cane areas were only gradually harvested till May/June when tigers themselves moved into adjacent low lying and marshy areas because of the heat and prevalence of water.

On 21 March 1979 two men and a pack horse were returning from a small township called Garjia to a village which was an encroachment into the buffer area of the Corbett National Park. The pathway led through thick undergrowth and a tiger launched an attack on the horse which escaped, but a man was accidentally killed and partially eaten. Almost two years later a lone man went into the forest before daybreak and was taken. Nearly six months afterwards another lone man was killed in the same area. This tiger was trapped and incarcerated in the Zoo where he died of a broken spirit within six months.

In March 1982 a lone fodder cutter of an elephant was killed and eaten by a tiger. The Field Director of Corbett maintained that this tiger particularly attempted to stalk lone fodder cutters, yet no attempt was made to send a companion, though normally every elephant has two men appointed to look after it. Meanwhile the tiger was acclimatized to aggression when he was chased off kills, pursued on elephants, and verbal abuse hurled at him by the Director *et al.* Two years later a lone fodder cutter was pulled off a tree and mauled by a tiger. Considerable doubt exists about who did the mauling, though the Director maintains it was the offending tiger of two years ago. A tigress with two young cubs also operated in the area. The man was not badly injured, and conjecture indicates that the tigress may have pulled the man out of the tree in a case of mistaken identity, and abandoned it when she realized what she had caught. No human will survive an attack from a large and determined tiger in search of prey. Ironically the man nearly died because the stitches in his scalp put in by a local doctor suppurated. The tiger was trapped and sent to the Zoo where he languishes with three canines broken.

In February 1985 a lone ornithologist was killed in the Corbett Park. Orders were issued that a prominent male tiger of the area had to be destroyed and it was only the efforts of Brijendra Singh, an Honorary Wildlife Warden, which proved that David Hunt had been killed by a tigress with young cubs to feed : that prevented the killing of an innocent tiger.

No rules for the entry of single persons into tiger areas exist, for this is a major cause of killings by tigers, and mainly occurs when the lone human is squatting in the manner of a four footed animal. A simple analogy should suffice. A motor vehicle with a running

engine will not disturb animals in protected areas because its four wheels simulate four legs, but a two legged human has only to alight when the animal will take off.

As tiger killings still occurred because of regressive human behaviour another Committee was constituted for the Kheri Region under the aegis of the Indian Board for Wildlife in 1982. They made the same recommendations and remarks as the previous committee and as a result a Tiger Watch was constituted in 1984, or five years after the original recommendation, but it did not take it long to become a farce. Originally the Finance Department, by which every other Government Department is hag-ridden, slashed the composition as a matter of principle. The problem which was a local one was taken charge of by Headquarters, presumably to justify their acquisition of the new vehicle allotted to the Watch, and to denigrate the Director of the Park. The motor vehicle allotted to the Tiger Watch was retained at Headquarters of the Forest Department, and an officer was sent on his first posting and appointed to be in charge, and his instructions from the Chief Wildlife Warden were that he would be responsible for any further killings. The Organization is completely demoralized, unmotivated, and emasculated, and as a portent of future events a tiger found dead on the banks of the Sarda river in February 1985 was burnt by the staff of the Tiger Watch, presumably to hide some evidence of the cause of its death. Such deaths have frequently been discovered. Prominent tigers are disappearing and it is suspected that poisoning of the carcasses of domestic stock because of a tardy payment of compensation, electrocution by farmers who stretch naked wires from transformers along their fields, placing of home-made bombs in carcasses, and shooting by trigger happy forest officers in search of wrongfully declared maneaters, is reducing tigers to low numbers.

The declaration of maneaters by the Chief Wildlife Warden is entirely arbitrary, and with complete disregard for the conservation of what is supposed to be our National Animal. In fact for many Forest Officers it is a privilege to destroy so called maneaters and a boost to their faltering egos. The defunct animal is then loaded on to the bonnet of a jeep and taken for an extensive image building tour before a grateful (*sic*) administration allots the skin to the killer.

In March 1983 a tigress was declared a maneater. She operated on the periphery of the Dudhwa National Park. On the night of the 10/11 March a trap cage was baited a km outside the Park and a tiger was trapped, out of a family of four. As the declared maneater was a tigress, the Lucknow Zoo to where it was sent announced the capture as that of a tigress. The animal was kept in seclusion on the excuse that she would not tolerate spectators. After some time it was announced that the tigress had died, and an unsavoury episode was closed. The human killings still continued, and ultimately a male tiger, unconnected with the family, was destroyed. The killings then ceased.

In July 1984 a tigress was declared a maneater for the killing of 3 persons inside the Reserved Forest. On the 16th of July a tiger was shot over a bait which had been put out for any tiger inside the forest. A male was shot who had two canines, a premolar and an incisor blown out by a charge of buckshot. The tigress still remains a declared maneater liable to destruction.

In December 1984 a tigress was declared a maneater for killing a lone human being immediately outside the Dudhwa National Park in a patch of sugarcane in the late evening. The Research Officer from the Corbett National Park was detailed to destroy this animal. He spent many nights wandering about the precincts in a jeep and friends trying to shoot a tiger, but fortunately was unable to do so. No more killings have however occurred since in the locality.

In January 1985 on hearing of a tiger kill of a buffalo about 15 km away in a patch of sugarcane the Research Officer announced that this was by the declared maneating tigress, though to reach the area would have meant the animal traversing long distances of open country to a place where there was a shortage of prey. He organized a beat in the sugarcane with two of



his friends, and they all fired at the tiger, which is supposed to have escaped, but wounded. No attempt was made to follow it and the dead tiger found and burnt on the banks of the Sarda a month later may well have been this animal.

The Wildlife Act lays down that there shall be no exploitation in the Park. In spite of this the Forest Department allows a month a year for people to collect firewood. This is supposed to be a limited operation confined to certain classified villages within a 5 km radius of the Park. However on payment of consideration it becomes a free for all and timber supposedly for home consumption is sold in open market. Such a plunder took place in January 1985 inside the Dudhwa National Park, and a tiger killed four persons thus trespassing, performing a protective duty devolving on the paid staff. The celebration of Park Day on the 1st February was cancelled as a result.

In February 1985 an inebriated man was cycling alone through a large plot of sugarcane on the north bank of the Sarda in the middle of the night. He had been advised not to go, but buoyed by his condition he insisted on doing so. It is presumed that he collapsed somewhere on the way in a drunken stupor and was pulled into the cane by a tiger, who was declared a maneater. In August this year a tigress was shot arbitrarily out of a family of four which was isolated in an area of sugarcane, supposedly being the same declared animal.

On the 6th of May a 15 month old tigress was seen by a tourist. She was very weak and thin and was limping badly from multiple wounds on her right foreleg. I approached the Director of the Park suggesting that she should be immobilized and medically examined. In spite of promises, nothing was done. In the first week of June I spoke to the outgoing Director of Wildlife in the Central Government on the subject, and he was also shown the lame tigress.

On the 7th July I wrote to the Chief Wildlife Warden, and on the 17th of August to the Prime Minister in his capacity as Chairman of the Indian Board for Wildlife. No action was taken until the end of September when the desperate and starving tigress chewed the arm of an old woman. The tigress was trapped on the 1st October and sent to the Lucknow Zoo where four captured tigers have already died, and the staff are supposed to subsist on their rations. The old woman has lost the use of her arm. No expenses have been paid to her.

Tigers have been ignorantly blamed for being so bold that they have taken to preying on dogs, goats and even chickens, when in reality desperate hunger has driven them to an unnatural diet. This was manifest in the so-called Sathiana maneater in 1978 who in reality had probably been washed down by the floods from Pilibhit and marooned in an area devoid of wild prey and with which he was unfamiliar.

In April 1985 a tigress mauled a grazier who went to collect wood in a dense copse near Maurenia Gaurhi on the banks of the Sarda. The tigress had cubs and was also guarding a hogdeer kill. She was declared a maneater.

In August 1985 a man took somebody else's wife into a field of sugarcane. The subsequent bargaining was unsatisfactory, and the man killed the woman and pulled her into a dense outcrop to simulate a tiger's drag. Personal vendettas are settled with the tiger as a convenient scapegoat for human delinquencies.

On 29 November, 1985, a lone labourer carrying a load of wood was killed and eaten in the Corbett National Park by a prominent tiger who was a regular Tourist Attraction. Once again the tiger who had supposedly killed David Hunt earlier in the year was suspected. This time he was not given the benefit of the doubt, though apparently doubt did exist, but was trapped and sent to the Lucknow Zoo to eke out his last years incarcerated. No rules have been evolved against the entry of lone men into tiger areas, though elaborate traffic regulations are maintained to ensure the safety of pedestrians on public highways.

## *Ad Nauseam*

The 1982 committee was appointed by the Indian Board for Wildlife under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister to enquire into the ongoing problem of man-eating by tigers in the Kheri District. The committee headed by the Deputy Minister for Environment made the specific recommendation that in order to solve the problem a Tiger Reserve should be constituted in the District with three core areas of the Dudhwa National Park, one in South Kheri, and one in Pilibhit. It also reiterated an old proposal that the Gholia area of about 3000 acres, illegally settled by Naxalites and others, and a holding ground for swampdeer during the monsoon, should be given alternate land in the Gola area of South Kheri, and this land incorporated in the Park.

If this proposal had been implemented, and with the accent on the conservation of the tiger, the problem would have been contained, instead of increasing in intensity as pressures continue to build up. Four Reserves, namely Buxa, Indravati, Namdapha and Nagarjunasagar have since been constituted, while the unfortunate District of Kheri and its inhabitants continue to suffer in a conflict which is entirely soluble given the will of the Administration to do so. It would seem that notwithstanding India's commitment to being a welfare state the Government just does not care.

If the Conservation of the Tiger is accepted as a symbolic protection of the entire Ecosystem that has to be saved, then the Central Government must acknowledge the responsibility of saving Wildlife. The Indian Board for Wildlife has accepted the fact that States are not pulling their weight as far as Wildlife and its conservation is concerned. Therefore to associate it with the Commercial Forestry Department because Wildlife lives in Forests, is comparable to putting the Finance Department under the Ministry of Works and Housing. The absence of a permanent Wildlife Cadre speaks for itself.

Forests and Wildlife was retained on the Concurrent List from the wisdom of the late Prime Minister, and in spite of the efforts of the Janata Party to revert its responsibility by the 42nd Amendment, back to the states. It will only be a blessing for the future if the Central Government is prepared to undertake an independent legislation in favour of Wildlife as is allowed by the Constitution, and provide the financial support for its projects. To attempt to motivate State Governments by committing them to providing 50% of the expenditure will never work and will merely cause delays, budgetary lapses and resentment. Ultimately when we have a Prime Minister not committed to the conservation of Wildlife the entire flimsy structure will collapse. Until we have an infrastructure in the shape of a Wildlife Service which will be responsible for its conservation in times of adversity, as well as good fortune, it will continue to remain dependent on personal commitment which cannot but be ephemeral.

Forests can be brought back to a pristine growth by a massive plantation and conservation effort, but the Wildlife once extirpated from these denuded forests can never be replaced. The only answer is to demarcate extensive and viable areas, as well as international Biosphere Reserves, and excise them from the jurisdiction of the Forest Department, and a separate Cadre formed for its administration. This would of course do away with the evils of dichotomy, advanced as an argument against the introduction of a separate service into the Forest. A massive operation of translocation should be initiated and the wildlife of threatened areas should be shifted to the newly earmarked zones. Particularly tiger areas should be sacrosanct and no intrusion should be allowed beyond a controlled Tourism. There should be a sugarcane free-buffer area surrounding a Wildlife area and Tiger Reserves should be contained by Electric Fences, so successful against the rhino in Dudhwa, and elephants and other varieties in Africa. Tiger populations are self regulating, and if the area in which they operate is restricted, their numbers will be controlled by intraspecific competition. It is only when they can expand into surrounding areas that socio-ecological conflict occurs, as is taking place so extensively in the Kheri District. Multiple Use areas can never work, and it is surprising that after twelve years of experience Tiger Project authorities should come forward with such a proposal for integration. It is obvious that with an increasing familiarization, and the biotic pressures associated with population increases, tigers will soon find themselves in conflict both with man and superman.